



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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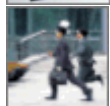
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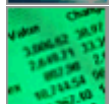
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For further information about this publication, contact Labour Market Statistics National Statistical Centre on Canberra (02) 6252 7206 or email <labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>.

About this Release

Labour Statistics News is published twice yearly by the Labour Market Statistics National Statistical Centre (NSC). It provides information about the latest in labour market statistics including: outlining recent developments and survey reviews; informing and seeking feedback on current projects; providing analysis and articles on labour-related issues; providing information on how to find, use and interpret ABS labour market statistics; providing useful contacts within the labour market area of the ABS; highlighting significant releases of ABS labour market data or analysis; and advertising upcoming statistical training in labour market statistics. Labour Statistics News aims to reach a wide range of users to inform and engage with the community on labour market issues and statistical developments.

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Message From the Director

Welcome to the fourth issue of Labour Statistics News, and my first as Director of the Labour Market Statistics National Statistics Centre. Labour Statistics News is produced twice a year, to promote the ABS labour statistics program, to support the effective use of these data, and to provide an opportunity for you to give us feedback on developments related to the program so that we can better meet your statistical needs.

This issue includes information on the latest developments in ABS labour market statistics and updates on current work, including:

- a review into the Labour Employer Surveys program;
- review of the Job Search Experience survey;
- review of communication from the Labour Market Statistics NSC; and
- investigations into options for linked employer-employee data.

See the [Recent developments](#), [Current projects](#) and Find Out More sections for more details on these, and other developments.

If you are looking to improve your understanding of the wide range of ABS labour statistics, a wealth of information can be found in the compendium publication [Australian Labour Market Statistics](#) (cat. no. 6105.0), in [Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods](#) (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001) and on the [Labour Topics @ a Glance](#) page of the ABS website. In addition, the Labour Market Statistics National Statistical Centre runs a one day training course, [Introduction to Labour Statistics](#), in partnership with the ABS National Statistical Training Institute, which informs participants of the ABS labour collections and their applications.

If you have any questions about aspects of the labour statistics program, please contact one of our subject experts shown in the Find out more page of this newsletter, or you can contact us on (02) 6252 7206 or email <labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>.

I hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative.

Kirsty Leslie, Director

Labour Market Statistics National Statistical Centre

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Current Projects

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Current Projects

Labour Market Statistics National Statistical Centre is undertaking a number of development and analytical projects to improve the relevance and reliability of labour market statistics and promote the effective use of these statistics. Current projects provides an overview of this work and contacts for further information.

This section contains the following subsection :

- Investigations into Options for the Development of Linked Employer-Employee Data
- Review of Labour Employer Survey Outputs
- Seeking Feedback on Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, and
- Retirement and Retirement Intentions Labour Household Survey Topics
- Investigation into Improving the Measurement of Job Change
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Investigations into Options for the Development of

Linked Employer-Employee Data

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Investigations into options for the development of Linked Employer-Employee Data

A variety of different linked employer-employee datasets have been developed by a range of statistical agencies and central banks across the OECD, but there has been very little information produced in Australia since the Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey (AWIRS) was last conducted in 1995.

Data which links employers and their employees have enabled researchers abroad to explore a range of employer-employee dynamics which are not possible from separate business-level and person-level datasets. Data in Australia regarding employers (often collected from businesses) are generally unconnected to data on employees (usually collected from individuals using household surveys), and the ability to relate these types of datasets would greatly increase the type of analysis which can be completed. In particular data to assess the impacts of changes in the work place relations environment and employee conditions, from both an employer and employee perspective, is seen to be a key data gap from a number of users.

The ABS has explored and outlined how options for a linked employer-employee dataset could be created. These options include making additional use of existing survey and/or administrative data through integrating existing datasets, and others which would involve new data collection to fulfil emerging research and policy needs, such as workplace relations. The work to date has focussed on outlining the options, therefore any substantial development work on one or more of these options would be contingent on the ABS receiving additional resources.

For more information please contact Kirsty Leslie on (02) 6252 5436 or email [<kirsty.leslie@abs.gov.au>](mailto:kirsty.leslie@abs.gov.au).

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Review of Labour Employer Survey Outputs

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Review of Labour Employer Survey Outputs

The ABS Labour Employer Surveys (LES) Strategic Enhancement Team and Labour Market Statistics National Statistics Centre jointly undertook a user review of the uses made of the existing labour employer statistics during July 2010. The aim was to obtain and document user feedback, and subsequently formulate recommendations for the prioritisation of existing LES outputs and products to better meet the priority needs of data users. Once the review process has been completed, key stakeholders will be advised of any changes to LES outputs before implementation.

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Seeking Feedback on Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, and Retirement and Retirement Intentions Labour Household Survey Topics

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Seeking feedback on Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, and Retirement and Retirement Intentions Labour Household Survey topics

The ABS periodically reviews the program of topics on our household survey program, and we are currently looking at whether there is justification to continue collecting the Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation (cat. no. 6239.0) and the Retirement and Retirement Intentions (cat. no. 6238.0) topics that are collected in the Multipurpose Household Survey (MPHS). These topics are conducted biennially, alternating between core and expanded content. The next proposed cycle, 2012-13, will be an expanded content year, as was 2008-09.

We are keen to find out if you have used this data/publication, how you have used the data collected in these topics, and whether you have any comments about these topics. In particular, we would like to hear if you have concerns if these topics were no longer collected as part of the labour household surveys program.

The latest MPHS CURF (cat. no. 4100.0.55.001) containing the above topics based on 2008-09 data was released on 12 July 2010.

For more information please contact Marietta Urh on (02) 6252 5565 or email <marietta.urh@abs.gov.au>.

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Investigation into Improving the Measurement of Job Change

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Investigation into improving the measurement of job change

With increasing mobility within the labour market there has been more demand for information on measuring the resulting job change. As the dynamics within the labour market have changed, so has the concept of a change in job evolved, particularly as flexibility has become an increasingly prominent element of the modern workforce. As a result, there is interest in measuring how much change is occurring, as well as the nature and the degree of job change.

This project will involve the review of job characteristics which are currently included within the measure of job change, including what a change in these characteristics means. From this review it is expected that the ABS will be able to improve its measurement of job change

in its existing statistics, through development work for the Labour Force Survey, Job Search Experience Survey and Labour Mobility Survey. Preliminary findings have already been implemented in the Job Search Experience Survey scheduled for 2011.

For more information please contact Michael Gerrity on (02) 6252 5514 or email <m.gerrity@abs.gov.au>.

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Communication Review

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Communication Review

The Labour Market Statistics National Statistics Centre is currently reviewing the way we communicate information about labour statistics with users. The communication review is looking at the purpose, structure and content of vehicles such as this newsletter, Topics @ a Glance on the ABS website, and Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0) with the aim of providing an appropriate level of information for different users.

From January 2011, it is intended that the content of Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0) will be reduced, in particular data tables 1.1 to 7.1 will no longer be included. The publication will continue to be released on a quarterly basis and will provide news, key summary of findings and analytical articles. For those users who refer to the data tables, information will be provided to direct you to the same data in the standard products from each survey.

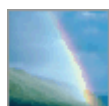
If you would like further information about the upcoming changes from the communication review please contact Kirsty Leslie on (02) 6252 5436 or email kirsty.leslie@abs.gov.au.

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Recent Developments

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Recent Developments

Within Recent Developments are details of some of the latest analysis and new statistical products undertaken by the Labour Labour Market Statistics National Statistical Centre. These projects improve the range of labour market statistics available and assist users in the effective use of these statistics.

This section contains the following subsection :

Review of Job Search Experience Survey

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Review of Job Search Experience Survey

Earlier this year a review was conducted into the Job Search Experience Survey (JSE) which focused on evaluating the relevance of data items in the survey and on assessing the extent to which the survey is continuing to capture the evolving nature of the labour market and changes in the experiences of people seeking work. As a result of the review, a number of issues were identified, and changes to improve and resolve these issues will be reflected in the JSE survey scheduled for July 2011.

For more information please contact Joanne Baker on (02) 6252 7059 or email <joanne.baker@abs.gov.au>.

Survey Recent Releases

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Survey Recent Releases

Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0)

Labour Statistics in Brief, Australia, 2010 (cat. no. 6104.0)

Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0)

Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001)

Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003)

Job Vacancies, Australia (cat. no. 6354.0)

Industrial Disputes, Australia (cat. no. 6321.0.55.001)

Persons Not in the Labour Force, September 2009 (cat. no. 6220.0)

Forms of Employment, Australia, November 2009 (cat. no. 6359.0)

Working Time Arrangements, Australia, November 2009 (cat. no. 6342.0)

Average Weekly Earnings, Australia (cat. no. 6302.0)

Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 2009 (cat. no. 6310.0)

Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 2009 (cat. no. 6287.0)

Australian Social Trends (cat. no. 4102.0)

Wage and Salary Earner Statistics for Small Areas, Time Series, 2003-04 to 2006-07 (cat. no. 5673.0.55.003)

Yearbook Australia, 2009-10 (cat. no. 1301.0)

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Articles and Analysis



Articles and Analysis

This section provides a summary of the latest articles and analysis by the Labour Market Statistics National Statistical Centre within various publications, promoting the effective use of labour market statistics. Articles and Analysis also includes references to labour articles in key ABS publications, such as Australian Social Trends.

Duration of underutilisation

The recent economic downturn has brought increased attention to changes in both unemployment and underemployment. The labour market appears to have responded to the recent economic downturn in a slightly different fashion to previous downturns, with lower than expected increases in unemployment. Understanding trends in the duration of underemployment is important in providing a holistic view of underutilisation and how this is changing over time. This article was published in the April 2010 issue of Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0) and provides data for the past ten years, in order to show changes in long-term unemployment and underemployment.

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Retrenched unemployed people

This article presents indicative estimates from May 2001 to February 2010 of retrenched people currently unemployed using data from the Labour Force Survey. By combining information on the duration of unemployment, together with information on the reason for unemployment, it is possible to identify retrenchments, and when they occurred. This article was published in the April 2010 issue of Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0).

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Dynamics of Trade Union Membership

This article presents a range of information about trade union membership in Australia. In 2009, the first significant annual increase in the proportion of employees who were trade union members was observed, increasing by one percentage point to 20% of all employees. In addition to time series information about levels of trade union membership, the article

explores a range new data about trade union members including duration of membership and previous membership. Information is presented by age, occupation, industry, state and sector. This article was published in the July 2010 issue of Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0).

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Aggregate monthly hours worked

This article explores trends in aggregate monthly hours worked per employed person. Analysis of the aggregate monthly hours worked per employed person over the last 32 years period reveals movements in the distribution of work amongst different populations of employed persons in the labour market, and is particularly illuminating during periods of economic downturn. Over the last 32 years, it is found that while the aggregate monthly hours worked per full- and per part-time employed person has risen, the aggregate monthly hours worked per employed person has fallen, which is partially explained by a large decrease in the ratio of full- to part-time employed persons. The aggregate monthly hours worked per employed person are also compared to the unemployment and underemployment rates, and we find some credence in anecdotal evidence that employers partially weathered the storm of the recent economic downturn by reducing employee hours rather than by retrenching workers. This article was published in the July 2010 issue of Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0).

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Working Time Arrangements

This article highlights changes made to the Working Time Arrangements survey in 2009. The Working Time Arrangements survey is conducted every three years as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey. The article discusses question sequencing changes that occurred for questions asked of employees on whether they had agreements to work flexible hours and whether guaranteed minimum number of hours. These questions were asked of only a subset of employees in 2006 but were asked of all employees in 2009. Comparisons are then made of the extent of these arrangements using the sequencing from 2006, whilst the demographic characteristics of people who have access to these arrangements are also featured. It also explores the new data item in 2009, 'Whether usually worked shift work and type of shift usually worked'. This article was published in the July 2010 issue of Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0).

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The labour market during recent economic downturns

For many people, the most direct impact of an economic downturn is the effect it has on their opportunities in the labour market. The impact of economic downturns on the Australian labour market depends to a large degree on the extent of the contraction in economic growth and economic conditions experienced by our major trading partners. The effect of downturns has also changed in recent times due to shifts in the Australian labour market including, among other things, increased female labour force participation, and a marked increase in part-time employment. This article was published in the March 2010 issue of Australian Social Trends (cat. no. 4102.0).

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Underemployment

Underemployment has declined from its peak during the recent economic downturn, but there are still many more underemployed people than unemployed. The recent economic downturn, reinforced the need to look beyond the unemployment rate in order to better

explain what is happening in the labour market. This article looks at underemployment in Australia over the last 30 years and the effect the recent economic downturn had on underemployment. This article was published in the June 2010 release of Australian Social Trends (cat. no. 4102.0).

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About the Labour Market National Statistical Centre

The Labour Market Statistics National Statistics Centre is responsible for:

- promoting the effective use of labour market statistics;
- influencing the development of national and international frameworks, and assisting with their implementation; and
- improving the relevance and reliability of labour market statistics produced by the ABS.

We have two teams who specialise in various aspects of the labour market:

Labour Market Dynamics

The Labour Market Dynamics team specialises in statistics that inform on transitions within the labour market, particularly into and out of employment. The team has a focus on understanding the nature of these transitions and the people who are affected. If you have any questions relating to transitions, unemployment and underemployment, underutilisation, job search experience and job vacancies, retirement, labour force participation or persons not in the labour force, please contact Joanne Baker (team leader) on (02) 6252 7059 or email [<labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>](mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au).

Wages and Workplace Relations

The Wages and Workplace Relations team specialises in statistics relating to the nature of employment, such as wages and conditions of employment, employment arrangements, working time arrangements, leave entitlements, and workplace relations (bargaining, trade union membership). If you have any questions in regards to earnings measures and sources (including gender wage issues), independent contracting and other forms of employment, casual employment or methods of setting pay, please contact Michael Gerrity (team leader)

on (02) 6252 5514 or email <labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information or queries regarding labour related statistics, contact the Labour Market Statistics Section on (02) 6252 7206 or email <labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>.

Published information is available free of charge on the ABS website. Where data are not available on our website at the level of detail you require, the ABS can provide you with customised data to meet your specific requirements. To discuss options, please contact Contact Client Services Section in Canberra for an obligation free quote on (02) 6252 7400 or email <information.consultancy@abs.gov.au>.

All key labour statistical releases and publications can be found at the Labour Releases section of the Labour Topics @ a Glance page. For help finding and accessing ABS products and services contact the National Information Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

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Introduction to Labour Statistics training course



Introduction to Labour Statistics is a one-day training course run in partnership between the National Statistical Training Institute and the Labour Market Statistics National Statistics Centre.

The training course suits people with or without a related academic background, providing an overview of the range of concepts and issues associated with ABS labour statistics. It also explores the data produced by both household and employer based collections, and highlights the range of data available.

Introduction to Labour Statistics training courses are generally held in each state capital each year, with courses scheduled in Sydney and Canberra in the remainder of 2010.

For more details about this and other statistical training, or to register interest in a course, please refer to the [ABS Training page](#), or contact Michael Gerrity on (02) 6252 5514 or email <labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>.

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Final issue of Labour Statistics News

This document was added or updated on 19/01/2011.

This is the final issue of this publication. The content of this publication is now incorporated as a core part of the quarterly Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0).

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